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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 16, 2008. Claims 1-9 and 11-13 were pending, with claim 10 having been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12 and 13 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter, and new claim 14 has been added. Claims 1-9 and 11-14 would be pending upon entry of this amendment, with claims 1 and 9 being in independent form.

Claims 1-4 and 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable by U.S. Patent No. 6,690,961 to Kaufman et al. Claims 5 and 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Kaufman in view of Geraats et al. (WO 02/04970).

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is allowable over the cited art, for at least the reason that the cited art does not disclose or suggest the aspects of the present application that (a) the imaging means is provided with a two-dimensional monitoring mode in which a desired slab of the object is measured using a pulse sequence for the dynamic measurement under a condition of applying gradient magnetic fields with a low spatial resolution, and is provided with a three-dimensional measurement mode in which the same slab is measured using the same pulse sequence under a condition of applying gradient magnetic fields with a high spatial resolution (independent claims 1 and 9 of the present application), (b) the dynamic measurement performed by the imaging means is blood imaging for observing a change of blood flow using a contrast agent, where *the slice encode is omitted in the two-dimensional monitoring mode to obtain two-dimensional images and the slice encode is added in the three-dimensional measurement mode to obtain three-dimensional images* (independent claim 1 of the present application), and (c) under the condition of applying gradient magnetic

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fields with low spatial resolution in the two-dimensional monitoring mode one of the slice encode and the phase encode is omitted and under the condition of applying gradient magnetic fields with high spatial resolution in the three-dimensional measurement mode both of the slice encode and the phase encode is imparted (independent claim 9 of the present application). Thus, in the above-mentioned aspects, two-dimensional measurements are obtained in monitoring mode and three-dimensional measurements are obtained in measurement mode.

Kaufman, as understood by Applicant, proposes a MRI imaging system which switches between a fast imaging fluoro-mode and a diagnostic imaging mode. In such system, a real-time image of the patient is displayed in fluoro-mode to allow the operator to position the patient and decide on adjustments to settings for diagnostic mode imaging to be performed.

The fluoro-mode and diagnostic imaging mode of Kaufman are apparently equated in the Office Action to the monitoring mode and measurement mode, respectively, of the present application.

While the imaging parameters in the fluoro-mode of Kaufman can be somewhat different than those in the diagnostic imaging mode, both the fluoro-mode and the diagnostic imaging mode include obtaining three-dimensional measurements. Kaufman teaches that it is desirable to have such data in fluoro-mode in order to provide an image in fluoro-mode that allows the operator to evaluate the parameters to be applied in diagnostic imaging mode subsequently. In each mode, phase encode and slice encode are performed.

In contrast, in the above-mentioned aspects of the present application, (i) *the slice encode is omitted in the two-dimensional monitoring mode to obtain two-dimensional images and the slice encode is added in the three-dimensional measurement mode to obtain three-dimensional images* (independent claim 1 of the present application), and (ii) under the

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condition of applying gradient magnetic fields with low spatial resolution in the two-dimensional monitoring mode *one of the slice encode and the phase encode is omitted* and under the condition of applying gradient magnetic fields with high spatial resolution in the three-dimensional measurement mode both of the slice encode and the phase encode is imparted (independent claim 9 of the present application).

The cited references simply do not disclose or suggest such aspects.

Applicant submits that the cited art, even when considered along with common sense and common knowledge to one skilled in the art, does *NOT* render unpatentable the above-mentioned aspect of the present application.

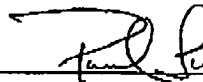
Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 9, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.

In view of the remarks hereinabove, applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any required fees, and to credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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